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THAT DREAM SHALL HAVE A NAME

That Dream Shall Have a Name

NATIVE AMERICANS REWRITING AMERICA

David L. Moore

University of Nebraska Press
Lincoln and London

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Set in Lyon Text by Laura Wellington.

Designed by J. Vadnais.

*Dedicated to the land, the ancestors,
the children, the wounded, and the healing.*

That dream
shall have a name
after all,
and it will not be vengeful
but wealthy with love
and compassion
and knowledge.
And it will rise
in this heart
which is our America.

—Simon Ortiz, *from Sand Creek*

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PREFACE

Over decades of trying to help college students of all backgrounds read Native American literatures, I gradually saw patterns in their questions. Thus I came to recognize five areas of understanding necessary for listening and responding to Native voices, and those five areas form the circle and the center of this book. Collecting and addressing the underlying questions as a set, I have chosen from time to time to engage classroom issues directly as an entrée into grounding thematic questions and as a link to those audiences in classrooms and communities. Native and non-Native students and their teachers are one intended audience, and I address scholarly readers as well, because I find that maintaining practical connections to classroom and community refines theoretical inquiry.

In that process the themes of this study emerge. Whether in high school and university classrooms, in Indigenous communities, or in professional conferences and publications, wherever conversations about Indians may turn on historical perspectives, cultural values, legal relationships, political dynamics, economic issues, or spiritual understanding, the following five underlying themes almost invariably come into play: authenticity, identity, community, sovereignty, and humor, or more generally irony.

A number of Native writers and scholars have shared with me how tiresome the persistence of elementary questions about Indians can get, questions that can sometimes mask an automatic posture of disrespect—“Are you a *real* Indian?” “Why don’t you just become Americans?” “Why do Indians get special privileges?”—even while vital issues remain far from resolved.

Authenticity and the other terms come immediately into play in countless daily exchanges in Indian Country. Similarly when I mention to a non-Indian fellow traveler on an airplane or at a picnic that I teach in the field of Native American literature, I sometimes get the skeptical response, “Do Indians *have* literature?” Sometimes the question is delivered with distinct vitriol. If Indian America is not only under the radar but semiconsciously repressed and suppressed, how could the American mainstream pay any attention to any of the themes of this book? Indeed I argue that Indigenous issues are ignored for ironic reasons that remain central to America’s often unrealized longings for its own true authenticity, identity, community, and sovereignty.

Especially when dominant bureaucracies get involved, there are profoundly different ways, Indian and white, of approaching each of these five broad issues, and America’s discourse about Indians, whether casual or official, remains contested particularly around these terms. Scholars, Native and non-Native, eventually agree on some fundamental differences between Indigenous and Euro-American cultures, having to do with interconnection, complexity, and kinship. By such differences each of the five terms may be understood in reductive, either/or ways of thinking or in more complex, nuanced, even tricky ways. Native writers tend to move away from the either/or options that Euro-Americans find easier to manipulate and to drive relations with Indians. “Kill the Indian and save the man!” would be the ultimate expression of that kind of assimilationist policy. Pluralism would be its opposite. For both cultural and historical reasons, binary narrative structures tend to support stories as told by the invaders: winners versus losers; civilization versus wilderness; even Indian versus white. As Native American writers might think of sovereignty, community, identity, and authenticity in complex, often humorous or ironical ways, then America might gradually think beyond the binaries of history.

What I discovered further is that those five areas of social interaction also tend to define or map what the world thinks of generally as a national entity, a national identity. To be a nation, we collect our stories within those themes of authenticity, identity, community, and sovereignty, and within each of those areas we experience unresolved ironies that often generate a vital sense of humanity, of self-reflection and empathy, at times most vividly crystallized in humor.

The convergence of these two lines of thinking, where five key terms in

Native expression merge with five key terms constituting a nation, resulted in this book: a look at how Native American voices would rewrite the American nation, indeed how they have been rewriting it from the start. As the historian William E. Farr wrote at the turn of the millennium, “For the past twenty years, western revisionists have been saying that we in the region must ‘rewrite our narrative,’ tell a different story, change our values” (Farr and Bevis, *Fifty Years after The Big Sky* 4). That urge to “change our values” has not been limited to America’s West. Clearly the pressure of “a different story” has been building in Indigenous voices for far longer than twenty years. Some Native authors have rewritten the story explicitly, some implicitly, and I try here to read how those literary efforts might speak to Native and non-Native readers alike.

Fundamentally this discussion arises from a deeper recognition that both the questions and the answers to a key issue of the modern age are pulsing in the veins of Native American literary expression. The modern, and now millennial question, from America to Bosnia to Sri Lanka, from Rwanda to Sudan to Venezuela, is ethnic difference within nation-states. It is a political question which translates into the philosophical and ethical problem of unity in diversity and which is the challenge of a now post-postcolonial and post-postmodern world. It is the originary American question of a “united states.”

Native American voices have been speaking cogently in print to that question for centuries. One of the fundamental dynamics of Native American storytelling may be the vitality and practicality of this principle of unity in diversity, specifically that it refines the Latinate discourse of *e pluribus unum*, which is linear in its trajectory of moving from diversity toward unity as “*out of many, one*.” Instead the unity in diversity suggested in such terms as the Lakota “Ho mitakuye oyasin!” (All my relatives!) or in the Iroquois “Akwe:kon” (All of us) balances unity *and* diversity in the dynamic of difference as the robust energy of community.

The material repression and oppression of Indigenous voices for over five hundred years by the oppositional forces of history are the denial of this principle. The dialectical materialism that would swallow up Native land stands in direct antagonism to unity in diversity by unity in uniformity, by the mercantile co-optation of otherness as resource and marketplace. By

the turn of the twenty-first century, the self-destructive tendencies of that global system are becoming clearer to some, perhaps to many. Indigenous ways of knowing and being interconnected within ecosystems are emerging by default against the corruption and pollution of the dominating economic logic. Strategically, dialogue beyond dialectics seems to be the dynamic of that unity in diversity.

Of course, many Native communities and individuals have not always demonstrated such dialogue when confronted by the brutal dualities and dilemmas of colonial domination. Yet there remains a voice of dialogue in Native literature, and that is what I am listening to here. How it speaks both among Native voices and between the Indigenous and the invaders plays out in a variety of ways that I have factored into those five interweaving categories. By analyzing texts of some key Native American writers over three centuries in relation to those five themes of interrelationship, I hope to tease out a clearer understanding of the possibilities of unity in diversity for America today.

A note on terminology, which goes to the heart of this study: Like many of my colleagues discussing Native studies, I variously employ terms that are used both casually and formally in tribal and scholarly contexts, such as *Indian*, *American Indian*, *Native American*, and *Indigenous*, but I prefer tribally specific monikers whenever appropriate. Such flexibility actually matches the resilience, as well as the resistant autonomy, of Native discourse and expressed values. In referring to the invaders, I generally employ *Euro-American*, though I want to address a fascinating choice by the Cherokee scholar Daniel Heath Justice, who prefers the label *Eurowestern* over *Euro-American* because the latter, Justice says, is “another appropriation by the colonizers of Indigenous presence” (*Our Fire Survives the Storm* xvi). While I entirely agree with Justice’s compelling and nuanced point in this discursive observation, I have important reasons for retaining more common terminology. This book is partly about Native self-expression as it bears on non-Native national identities, specifically how Indigenous writers would change Europeans into Americans. Indigenous writing often, though not always, bears the burden of this purpose. Thus I use *Euro-American* not as a colonizer’s appropriation but, toward the indeed utopian undertones in much of Native writing, as a goal of mutuality and respect. (And I retain the capitalized first

A to maintain the continental and cultural distinctions.) I respect Justice's reasons for suspecting the term of insidious discursive theft. His own approach as "explicitly activist and to some degree polemical" (8) makes room for such revisionism. My own position as a "Eurowesterner" requires a different ethical approach. Trying to remain descriptive rather than prescriptive in foregrounding Native voices, this study is indeed an attempt to reenvision what Euro-Americans might become if they learn to listen to Native American approaches to America.

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THAT DREAM SHALL HAVE A NAME

INTRODUCTION

Fool Soldiers

A True Story

Around 1860 in what is now South Dakota, Wanatan, or Martin Charger, a young mixed-blood member of the Lakota Sioux nation, lived in the Indian village across the Missouri River from the old Ft. Pierre trading post. Charger, a member of the Two Kettles band, was reputed to be the grandson of Meriwether Lewis. According to one Two Kettle Lakota oral tradition, Lewis had had a liaison in late September 1804 with the daughter of Buffalo Robe, a Lakota subchief along the Missouri trek where the Corps of Discovery had camped for four days of tense negotiations and conciliatory feasting at the mouth of the Teton River. The result of that union was Zomie, or Turkey Head, also known as Long House, who in turn was the father of Martin Charger. Another story makes Charger the grandson of an early trader named Reuben Lewis.¹ Whichever story is real, it is clear that this young man grew up with a unique perspective as a mixed-blood, yet traditional, Lakota.

Just prior to 1862, Charger, along with his *kola* (beloved friend) Kills Game and Returns Triumphant, had organized a band of *akicita*, a soldier society. Their uncomplicated mandate, “to help others,” had come from Kills Game’s vision of ten black deer. In the dream, one among the black stags who spoke to Kills Game had said simply and forcefully, “Do good for the people.” Charger and Kills Game felt their lives were lined up together in this vision. They joined with a small number of companions, among them Swift Bird and Four Bears, to respond to frontier events in the spirit of traditional Lakota

values of courage, fortitude, generosity, and respect for wisdom, to be a peaceful center in the growing storm.

The late summer and fall of 1862 brought the full force of that storm down upon them. Just east of Dakota Territory, their woodland cousins the Santee Sioux had been squeezed for decades by white settlements into a narrow corridor along the Minnesota River. The Santees' treaty rights to annuity supplies had been trampled by corrupt agents from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. They were starving, and the now famous retort by the agent had been, "Let them eat grass." After a violent incident over a settler's cow in July, the Santees finally ransacked the settlements in Minnesota, more populous than the Dakotas, killing more than eight hundred men, women, and children and driving off the other settlers. To put down the so-called Minnesota Uprising, a local militia, backed by the U.S. Army in the midst of its own war farther east and south, retaliated and defeated the Santees, imprisoning around two thousand warriors. But many Santees escaped and scattered, both to Canada and to the Dakotas along the Missouri River.

One starving Santee band of fugitives, led by White Lodge, arrived that fall near the trading post called Ft. Pierre on the Missouri, where Charger, his family and friends, and their akicita society made their home in the permanent Sans Arc and Two Kettles camp. Though the Santees were defeated and bedraggled, they still were looking for allies to fight the whites. White Lodge's band paraded their secret weapon: white hostages, two women and four children. Saying the whites wouldn't fire on them as long as they held captives, White Lodge challenged the Two Kettles and Sans Arcs to join them in war against the whites so that what had happened in Minnesota would not happen in the Dakotas. Many older Two Kettles wanted to join White Lodge, but some of the warrior youths were against it, partly because the Santees had previously encroached on their hunting grounds. So the Two Kettles said no thanks to the prospect of war and sent the disappointed Santees and their hostages upriver with some provisions.

Charger's young akicita society saw here an opportunity to fulfill their vision. They spoke in council to rally their people to join them in freeing the white hostages from the Santees. Yet their words did not move their fellow Lakotas. Unsuccessful in persuading the rest of the skeptical camp to support them, they loaded up goods donated from Charlie Primeau's trading post at Ft. Pierre and headed upriver on horseback, about ten days behind

the Santees. They found White Lodge's band camped on the cottonwood flats across from the mouth of the Grand River. The camp was in bad shape, having been joined by more Santee stragglers from the Minnesota fighting. It was October, with winter coming on, and there was little food. Charger's group of warriors, barely ten strong including some of their wives to mark them as a peace delegation, considered attacking but knew they could not fight that many Santees. They were in a position only to barter for what they wanted, but the ground they stood upon served their purposes.

White Lodge and his followers were starving. They took the ransom goods and more. Although one member of Charger's group refused to give up his horse, White Lodge traded the hostages for nearly everything else the *akic-itas* had: horses, blankets, dried meat, even moccasins.

As Charger and his friends headed back south with the captives, the early snows began. They walked and carried the children on their backs or on their one horse, stopping to wait out the icy storms in an abandoned cabin. When they finally reached Ft. Pierre after a grueling trek of wintry weeks, the trader Charlie Primeau provided a wagon and horses, and they hauled the captives farther south along the Missouri, two or three days, to Ft. Randall, where the bluecoat troops could return the freed hostages to remnants of their Minnesota families.

But Charger's *akicitas* were not prepared for the greeting they got from the U.S. Army troops under Colonel Pattee, in charge of the Ft. Randall garrison. Ever since the Minnesota war that fall, the whites all over Dakota country had been trigger-happy. Aggravating the tensions, President Lincoln had issued an order that those involved in the massacres should be executed. Pattee received the hostages, heard nothing of their friendship with their rescuers, and promptly threw Charger, Kills Game, and their companions into the stockade jail. They watched two members of their soldier society die there of exposure. After weeks of imprisonment, the rest were sent back to Ft. Pierre with Colonel Pattee's bizarre warning: Let this harsh treatment be an object lesson to any Indian who crosses the whites.

Ironies mounted on ironies. When Charger and his exhausted, grieving group drove Primeau's wagon back into the Two Kettles camp, they were not welcomed home. In the confused distress of 1862-63, the rest of the Two Kettles met them with the mocking epithet by which history now knows them: *Akicita wacintonsni*, "Fool Soldiers."

Though the wind-driven snows had covered the plains and the river breaks, the small group of warriors and their wives soon left the shame of that camp and moved to a new site upriver, a corner of the later Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation, where for decades they lived out their lives. Until recently Lakota descendants of the Fool Soldiers remained ashamed of their family heritage, though several among them claimed into the later twentieth century that their own ancestor had been the leader, whether Swift Bird, Four Bears, or Charger. Charger died around the turn of the twentieth century, after congressional hearings and reparations had recognized his efforts at reconciliation as “a friend of the white man,” always a dubious distinction.²

The Imaginary Frontier

Beyond language, beyond limiting labels that divide and conquer lives on the land, the earth itself exemplifies a way to behave, a way to think without borders, in cycles, a way to live, serve, die. The powerfully silent earth finds voice in Indigenous lifeways. The Fool Soldiers, not unlike Indian activists a century later at Alcatraz in 1969 or at Wounded Knee in 1973, were advocating essentially what Native storytellers and writers have been saying from the beginning, like the earth itself: We are here. We are alive. We are not leaving.

These are some radical ideas I hear in this story. Since first hearing of Martin Charger and his akicita band during my days as an undergraduate at the University of South Dakota, I’ve come to understand how resolutely Indian activists and writers have been trying to rewrite history, the “vanishing” narrative of Indians in America, from the beginning of the colonial era, since long before the 1960s or 1970s.³ With an activist agenda, Native writers have struggled to redefine America from the start, because America is built on the vanishing of Indians.⁴ Indeed among the grievances in the Declaration of Independence was the standard view that King George III “endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction, of all ages, sexes and conditions.” “Merciless Indian Savages” don’t fit into the body politic.

Listening to Native American voices, this book considers that misfit, that missed fit, and that body politic, the ways those “merciless Indian Savages” have been speaking and writing to America’s ideals of freedom. This intro-

duction contextualizes the book's five themes and five authors in light of America's national narrative. A brief conceptual map for the sections of this introduction will be useful.

In the first section, "A True Story," we have read the Fool Soldiers' story, where a set of key concepts emerges, forecasting dynamics of the literature. For historical and ideological context, this section, "The Imaginary Frontier," maps American self-contradictions as fertile ground for Native American irony, where the Fool Soldiers drama took place. Thus we begin with America's founding binary of civilization and wilderness, culture and nature, white and Indian, and that overview turns us to alternatives in the next section.

Toward the specific chapters, the short section titled "Circle of Five Themes and Five Authors" forecasts the five key concepts of Native American nationhood emerging from the Fool Soldiers' narrative that have spoken directly to contradictions in American nationhood: sovereignty, community, identity, authenticity, and irony. By unraveling or complicating America's frontier, Native activists and writers suggest the chapters of this study.

I read the five themes across five major authors: William Apess, Sarah Winnemucca, D'Arcy McNickle, Leslie Marmon Silko, and Sherman Alexie. Each chapter of the book focuses on one theme and applies that theme to one of the authors, with additional examples from the others. Thus the chapters on each theme linger with one author before drawing the others into the conversation. They all speak to the five issues in the story of America, reshaping modern notions of nationhood.

Because this study focuses on the themes and not on the authors, a biographical appendix must suffice for each of these remarkable voices. Other biographical and critical studies have covered their lives, and I will offer more biographical perspective where appropriate for the discussion of each theme as well.

After introducing the themes, we begin to mark their significance in "Rewriting Nationhood, Rewriting Sovereignty," previewing a vision of American nationhood suggested by these writers. Understanding Indigenous approaches especially to "sovereignty" will lead us briefly to "Ground Theory," a multifaceted lens that focuses the five themes for analysis of Indigenous texts. Through ground theory, we try to keep listening in specific ways to voices of the earth that cross America's ideological borders.

We will read Indigenous approaches to each theme as a facet of nationhood, and further how these writers thus strategically complicate America's reductive and exclusionary binary of the frontier.⁵

Let's begin with America's originary contradiction, that potent frontier mentality, a fissure where America's outsiders have found both inequality and opportunity. One of the many intriguing dynamics of the ongoing process of revision by Native American writers hinges on the irony in America's vision. Not only has America always been at war with Indians, but it has always been at war with itself. The Civil War was only the most dramatic moment of this. From the start of Christian colonization, the inequities of race, class, and gender have remained the parallel, if repressed, history. At the founding of the republic, a clash between American ideals and American oppression was clear to many, and Indigenous writers, like other "others," have exploited that fissure, that crack in the Liberty Bell. Maureen Konkle measures that crack as "a contradictory discourse on Indians" (*Writing Indian Nations* 9). Inherited from the colonial Doctrine of Discovery, standard discourse of U.S. federal Indian policy mixed the ideology of racial difference, where whites were necessarily superior and Indians inferior, with the practicality of treaty making, where whites and Indians were necessarily equal signatories. If America's right hand had to sign for legal title to aboriginal lands, its left hand held the Bowie knife. Such a contradiction equaled a denial of Indian nationhood—in favor of American nationhood—where, as Konkle explains, "A modernizing Indian nation—an autonomous Indian nation in time—is inconceivable within the theory of Indian difference; the only civilized society possible is that of EuroAmericans" (10). The subjection of the antebellum Cherokee nation in America's South to the reactive, illegal executive and legislative policy of Jackson's Indian Removal Act of 1830 is one of the most famous cases of America's fatal contradictions, among hundreds, thousands, even millions of other examples. The sorrow and irony of that representative history are only intensified by the analysis of nationhood by the Cherokee scholar Daniel Heath Justice: "Indigenous nationhood is distinguished from Eurowestern nationalism by its concern for respectful relational connection" (*Our Fire Survives the Storm* 152).

Unable to conceive of such "relational connection" with Indigenous nations, America's story of itself relegated Indians to a timeless past—and

to an “Indian Territory”—to avoid facing the contradictions in its own founding ideologies. If the Civil War was the loudest explosion of those contradictions, Sand Creek, Wounded Knee, and the Oklahoma Land Rush were among countless others. Across this history and into the twenty-first century, Native writers have been exhorting, warning, joking, pleading, grieving, reconciling, rebelling, and revising. From the beginning they have offered their own people a story to live by, and they have offered America a way to conceive of potential American healing in the ultimate ironic reversal: modern Indian nations.⁶

The politics of Indigenous nationalism took a global step recently with the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in which Article 5 both affirms the right to existence for Indigenous nations and subsumes them under modern nation-states: “Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.” Not only has Indigenous “choice” been conflicted historically in the phrase “if they so choose [to participate],” but definitions of the term *state*, in which Indigenous institutions “participate,” remain quite open as well.⁷ The erasure of Indian nationhood, the “right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions,” has been the real agenda of American history and its textbooks.

Concisely summarizing this long-running discursive battle over whose story to tell—whose freedom to celebrate—the late Tewa anthropologist Alfonso Ortiz lists eight errors of the standard historiography.⁸ In “Indian/White Relations: A View from the Other Side of the ‘Frontier,’” Ortiz claims that the first concept “that historians of Indian/white relations have used in their efforts to interpret Indian experiences” has been “the celebration of Western civilization” (2). This *a priori* notion in “the old way of doing history” “has bred a relentless linearity of thought and, sometimes, cultural arrogance” (2). Ortiz continues, worth quoting at length:

A related notion, that of the frontier has been much more actively harmful to the cause of Indian survival and to the writing of meaningful histories of Indian/white relations, let alone of Indian tribes themselves. As long as the white frontier was alive and well, Indian people had to

fight a desperate rearguard action to survive its advance, so they had neither the time nor the means to tell their stories, to relate their own experiences. The notion of the frontier has fallen into disfavor as both an assumption and a research tool, so I will avoid flaying it yet again. However, because it has been around so long and is so pervasive in our lives and language, it may be a long time, if ever, before the concept of frontier is expunged from our everyday consciousness.(3)

Ortiz is offering a radical revision that requires jettisoning the persistent frontier paradigm, so that “Indian people” may “tell their stories” and “relate their own experiences.” (We shall see echoes of this precise dynamic in the views of another pueblo writer and scholar, Simon Ortiz, in his seminal statements on authenticity as nationalism.)

Alfonso Ortiz continues, “I would propose that we dispense with the notion of frontier altogether when talking about historical encounters between peoples, both for the reasons I have already indicated and because it is possible to make so much mischief with this notion. In our everyday life, the concept of frontier is too deeply entrenched for there to be any hope of expunging it soon; but since historians put it there to begin with, historians and their students should work to root it out” (9). If historians did “put it there to begin with,” Native writers, as we shall see, have been working “to root it out” from the beginning as well.

This study is essentially a look at both the “mischief” in this binary notion and at some of the efforts to rewrite the record without the frontier defining the dynamics. Since he published “A View from the Other Side of the ‘Frontier’” a generation ago, this suggestion by Ortiz has been gathering momentum. For instance, Joshua David Bellin, in *Demon of the Continent: Indians and the Shaping of America*, explains the historical content of this shift in perspective, that “cultures in contact are *intercultural*, consisting of the complex, intricate, and even indeterminate interrelationships among their diverse members” (5). The a priori fact of interrelationship leads to the logic of this fundamental shift in historiographic discourse: “What cultural encounter illustrates is the inadequacy not only of fixed frontiers but of fixed cultures” (5). A certain mode of postmodernism might claim the relativism, indeterminacy, or impurity of culture, but throughout the modern era of colonial “frontiers,” and long prior, according to Bellin, the fixed

duality of cultural identity is doubtful. The Fool Soldiers embodied and acted upon that more fluid version of cultural identity that melted the rigid frontier of the American mind. Thus my choice in this study is to reject the term as unhelpful to critique the dynamics of Native—and non-Native—American narratives, because, as Bellin, Ortiz, and others insist, “frontier history” is too loaded with dualistic filters that blur the stories of more complex lives. (I return to a discussion of “frontier” terminology in the chapter on identity, which is so often split by that imaginary line.)⁹

If the classic text of the American historical mentality of opposition was articulated by the Harvard historian Frederick Jackson Turner in his famous 1893 essay, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” its racial markers were clear from the start.¹⁰ Although it defines America’s self-concept, the frontier is more of a myth than race itself. The frontier is a fantasy built upon a fantasy. Turner’s description of the frontier as the basis of American character is full of the language of freedom for whites that assumes dispossession of Indians, even as it obscures disenfranchisement for blacks: “opportunity,” “movement,” “free land,” “unrestraint,” “escape from the bondage of the past,” “ever retreating frontier,” “discovery.” Turner’s founding discourse fails to recognize humanity across the “frontier.” To borrow from Rennard Strickland, an Osage/Cherokee scholar, professor, and former dean at the University of Oregon School of Law, this is a historiography of justification (“The Eagle’s Empire” 261).

Other historians have summarized Turner’s thesis as they critiqued it: “Euro-America’s frontier expansion into ‘free land’ explained the development of American democracy” (Klein, *Frontiers of Historical Imagination* 13), and “the frontier experience had a lasting if not permanent impact on the American character and society” (Ridge, “Turner” 1090). The “Turner thesis” soon “became the organizing principle of American historical studies and a subject of continuing controversy” (1090). William Cronon writes, “Turner believed that the encounter with ‘free land’ had transformed the American character, making it restless, inventive, acquisitive, individualist, egalitarian, democratic. The frontier, in other words . . . had forged American nationalism and democracy” (“Turner” 692).

The crux of the controversy is whether the “frontier” strengthened or split the American psyche, whether it charted the vision or the blindness of America—or both. Patricia Limerick identifies the fundamental dichotomy

in Turner: “Turner said that the frontier was the most important factor in American history. . . . Perhaps his most memorable suggestion was this one: ‘the frontier is the outer edge of the wave [of settlement], the meeting point between savagery and civilization’” (“Frontier” 255). The problem is that there never was such an “outer edge.” Instead both “savagery and civilization” abounded across the reductive racial divide. Clearly America built itself on its own apprehensions of the violent divide between wilderness and civilization. It was hampered by the fear dwelling in the heart of its inventive and democratic faith. The historical misreadings of land and peoples triggered by the dominant discourse of savagery and civilization remain the tragic flaw of America. As the years saw extensive scholarship toward abandoning or tweaking Turner’s frontier thesis of American history, the significance of the Fool Soldiers story has grown.¹¹

Yes, the problem has been that Turner was too right: Americans do see their world as a frontier. That is the metaphor by which the nation fantasizes and constitutes itself on this continent.¹² Without material facts, Turner was describing an ideology rather than an intellectual history, much less a documented, historical reality. He expressed an ideology that claimed history for itself and denied history to what Hegel described as a “voiceless past.”

As Kerwin Klein says of a Euro-American frontier mentality: “The frontier was not just the place where civilization and wilderness made American democracy, it was the ragged edge of history itself, where historical and nonhistorical defied and defined each other” (*Frontiers of Historical Imagination* 7). Like the unpopulated, inhospitable, and therefore liberal or free fantasy space of the “Great American desert,” America assumes an ahistorical time of its disembodied Indian projection. Indeed one reason that “the Indian” has always been vanishing in the Euro-American mind is that Natives have never been seen to have a history. Ideologically they have always been not-here, not-now, perhaps to directly offset the material reality that they were and are so very much here now in their embodied presence on this land, and ultimately that the land itself is embodied in their humanity. Thus merely by speaking or writing, by voicing that grounded, embodied humanity, Native artists try to offset their ideological erasure. The Anishinaabe poet and scholar Kim Blaeser writes of the challenge, “Indeed, any discussion of the literary representation of history in the Americas finds its center in the notion of possession” (“The New ‘Frontier’” 38).

The ideology of American “possession of the land and its resources” built a settlement culture upon a fantasy of the evaporating Indian that has permeated American courthouses, statehouses, and jailhouses. Rennard Strickland writes of a “jurisprudence of justification” carried out by the U.S. Supreme Court “that rationalized legal grounds for the conquest and the conquerors’ will” (“The Eagle’s Empire” 261). Because resistance to colonialism and manifest destiny has been seen by European and other immigrants to be so pointless in what Strickland describes as “a nation of the future” (260), there was no real story to tell on the other side of the frontier.

Against such a unilateral history, the Native writers we study here show us from across that frontier imaginary a narrative different from Euro-American domination. They guide us toward a more complex paradigm of individual and national identity that resists the reductions of Turner’s binary frontier.¹³ Thus when we read of the Fool Soldiers, it raises questions widely unrecognized by “history.” The tale is too complex, too elusive for conquest, with its double fold of resistant difference within the Indian community apart from any resistance across the colonial frontier. Instead the colonial drone, with its tired binary of civilization and wilderness, is still educating and entertaining America.

A further, more specific reason that America fails to recognize the ongoing presence of Native America as a *de facto* part of itself is its refusal to recognize the reality of tribal sovereignty in its own history. If this sounds tautological, that’s because it is. America is built on a tautology: Indians must have disappeared because we’re here now; we’re here now because Indians must have disappeared. The cyclic reasoning of this racist formulation overlooks the facts of Indian presence and American pluralism—because of a contradiction prior to the tautology: American history is unique among modern nations, following on the Iroquois model, in the Constitution’s originary claim, if not its achievement, of uniting diverse states and, by extension—by incremental legislation—uniting diverse immigrants, freed slaves, and original Indigenous inhabitants of this land. The disjunctions between American ideals and realities in forging that union measure against that claim of unity across difference.

In this context, one may say that Euro-American national identity has molded itself around denial of tribal sovereignty. That absent presence defines the nation, from its legal codes to its literature. As a number of schol-

ars (whom we will discuss further in the “Rewriting Nationhood” section) have established, America’s conflicted notions of Indianness have indeed shaped American identity, community, nationalism, and empire.¹⁴ Roy Harvey Pearce explains, “In its origins the American’s need to compare himself with the Indians whom he knew is as deep and basic as humanity. . . . Even as all American thinking about the Indian was based, at the very least, on an implicit comparison of savage and civilized life, a great deal of his thinking about himself was based on explicit comparison of the two” (*Savagism and Civilization* 135). An internal frontier reflected the external, and vice versa. Amplifying Turner, Pearce points to “the westward course of empire” as the exterior consequence of that projection. Because that “American mind” remained locked in the binary projection of “a good devoutly to be wished for” in savagism, the “civilized man face to face with savages” (135) must miss the independent realities of those “savages.”

Thus if America built itself around “the Indian,” this mold, like the negative space in and around a sculpture, has taken the negative cast of projection, erasure, and self-definition that denies the positive presence of tribal sovereignty in the so-called American Other. The canonized James Fenimore Cooper, author of some of the first American, early nineteenth-century “best-sellers,” is perhaps the archetypal American writer for precisely these reasons: he both affirms and mourns the Native presence only as negative and terminal, as the *last* of the Mohicans. This American literary prototype does not acknowledge that an Indigenous presence remains after Leatherstockings, or Shane, or the Lone Ranger, or he who “Dances with Wolves” rides off into the sunset.

Beginning from a different story of Indigenous continuance, the point in so much writing by Native Americans is that Native survivance is not a retrospective, after-the-fact, postmodern event, not a recapturing of agency *after* revised history, but that it remains an ongoing, multifaceted set of facts that have always been in play.¹⁵ The Spokane scholar and poet Gloria Bird offers such a challenge: “When we change our focus to a native readership and what is being represented *to* us and *about* us, a very different set of relationships must be examined” (“The Exaggeration of Despair” 48). The potential dynamics of internalized oppression as well as cultural and political reaffirmation emerge where Bird refocuses questions of Native American literature on behalf of “a native readership.” Indeed such a complex

role for Indigenous writers hearkens in the quiet of print on paper to the more dramatic role of the Fool Soldiers and their bare footprints in the snow. As a mediating force, the Fool Soldiers strove to “satisfy the epistemological expectations of both audiences,” as James Ruppert characterizes contemporary Native American writers who “insist on their freedom to use the forms and expectations of both Native and Western cultural codes to achieve the goals of each” (*Mediation* 7). Could Native and Western goals ultimately merge? We shall see what some Native writers have to say on this fundamental question.

Resistance runs deep against multiple perspectives. The past generation has seen various efforts at revising history textbooks to give more recognition to the experiences and contributions of women, people of color, and labor classes. However, a 1995 Senate resolution against such revised “history standards” advocates “a decent respect for the contributions of Western civilization” (Nash et al., *History on Trial* 235).¹⁶ The entrenched domination by race, class, and gender digs as deep as the civilization-wilderness divide in the frontier imagination of America’s leadership and its populace.¹⁷

An argument of revisionary historians, as well as Native writers since the beginning of this nation, is not to inflict mere guilt on whites for the past but to foster informed responsibility for the inherited present and future. A central piece of that information is the ideological rather than factual basis of the frontier. The Native American writers in this study have maintained as one of their primary purposes the peeling back of dominant American blindness to their own people’s ongoing humanity. Reading their narratives and their pronouncements, we may begin to understand the historical mismatch of consciousness.

Circle of Five Themes and Five Authors

Replacing the linear notion of a frontier, the story of the Fool Soldiers embodies four concepts in a circle, plus a fifth at the center as an animating principle. Readers of any background must begin to grasp this set of ideas in order to read American Indian literatures with critical *simpatico*. A grasp of these key dynamics helps listeners listen to Native American texts. With the help of the Fool Soldiers and five selected Native authors, plus a number of other Indian writers, this study looks at Indigenous views of sovereignty, community, identity, and authenticity—each and all pivoting round

a fifth dynamic, humor, a fundamentally humane Native irony that so often animates and undergirds the other four concepts. Conceptual and etymological links between *humor*, *humus*, and *human* suggest the grounded humanity that is the life of these stories, enacting the historical irony that Indigenous humanity remains on the ground of America.

Although easily read in a tragic mode, the Fool Soldiers' story indeed embodies the irony that is at the heart of Native humor, the complexity of Indigeneity that will not be reduced to existential or historical predictability. A full spectrum of stories, from "tragic" to "comic," emerges from this circle of five concepts, and the full set constitutes what may be called a "nation." The project of this volume is to complicate the definitions of these key terms in Indian studies, and thereby in American studies. It is precisely the limited definitions imposed on these terms by "frontier" history that has limited Americans' readings of Native literature and lives, and by reflection has limited Americans' readings of themselves.

The point is to read authenticity, identity, community, sovereignty, and humor beyond the frontier in dialogue with each other, both within communities and between them. To understand a tribe's national identity, we cannot discuss Indian identity without discussing sovereignty and vice versa; nor can we discuss community or sovereignty without a redefinition of authenticity; and so on.¹⁸ Where appropriate, I intersperse comparisons and conversations with mainstream American approaches to these terms. All the spokes of the wheel are necessary for the national narrative to roll forward.

Between the isolating death of tragedy and the animating life of comedy the conceptual sphere of these terms offers various positions for Native voices in history. Each writer is unique in complex context. Some speak more to sovereignty, some more to identity, some more to community. Critical perspectives generated by the interaction of these dynamics in Native stories emphasize revisionary notions that play out in countless ways in Native American literature. These dynamics suggest, for example, that authenticity is not defined by time; identity is not defined by a single center; community is not defined by a circumference; and sovereignty is not defined by domination. Humor is the surprise in each of these redefinitions, a play of interrelationship as the operative term inside each and among these ideas. Such a dynamic replaces the stoic and static.

As the chapters focused on each term explain, Indigenous sovereignty

becomes the dynamic of sacrifice. Community becomes animism. Identity functions paradoxically as change. Authenticity works as translation. The ironies of humor work to humanize Indigenous subjects. Effectively each of the five terms becomes a verb instead of a noun. Sovereignty sacrifices. Community animates. Identity changes. Authenticity translates. Humor humanizes.

Although they intricately entwine, each lens, as a mode of reading, asks separate questions. Native and non-Native readers looking for authenticity tend toward the anthropological; students and critics analyzing identity lean toward the psychological; readers focusing on community frequently tend toward the historical; and those looking for sovereignty tend toward the political or legal issues in a text. While most scholarly readers draw on the mythical, they often end up interpreting Native narratives from their various disciplines in ways that continue to miss the stories' own purposes for Native survivance. Seeking authenticity, readers often reify the "vanishing Indian" by an anthropological focus on static ethnic purity in the past. Seeking identity as a psychological focus they reify a story's unsustainable dilemmas of cultural mixing in the present, following an oppositional dualism. Even seeking sovereignty as a political or historical focus in a text may overstate the dreams of community for the future. Each overreading will then produce a certain romantic and static nostalgia. A more precarious but perhaps more accurate and dynamic mix of these four terms, each vivified by humor, is necessary for a fairer reading of Native literary expression.

All of these are the questions of national identity. Each lens brings up different textual and contextual dynamics, which I explore selectively. For example, in the sovereignty chapter, I map the discourse of "three sovereigns" deriving from the U.S. Constitution. Similarly in the authenticity chapter and the conclusion, I briefly explore some general issues of America's own anxiety over authenticity, questions of settler colonialism longing to become authentically at home in what is still described as "the New World." Such contexts mold the national identities of Native texts and their readership.

The contextual cycle of these five terms establishes what it means to live in an Indigenous precolonial world, but it has served to strengthen a sense of struggle, hope, and humor that enables survival in a colonial world of invasion and alienation. As we shall see, tribal sovereignty grows on a sac-

rificial depth of commitment to interrelationships or kinship between matter and spirit, human and nonhuman. Native peoples continue to conceive of their tribal sovereignty as the spiritual, historical, legal, and political essence of nation and community that in turn serves as the ground for individual identity. As this cycle constitutes the set of criteria for authenticity, the circle goes round and round.

To explore these central ideas, we will look to writers who, like the Fool Soldiers, have striven to speak across the cultures. They each have suffered some of the same misreadings as the Fool Soldiers as well: William Apress in the 1830s, Sarah Winnemucca in the 1880s, D'Arcy McNickle focusing on the pre-1930s, Leslie Marmon Silko launching from the 1960s and 1970s, and Sherman Alexie at the turn of the current century.

My rationale for choosing these five writers is both historical and thematic, both diachronic and synchronic. Each writer speaks to and from his or her time to ours and to each other. Each is both representative and unique. Apress and Winnemucca bracket the nineteenth century. McNickle and Silko bracket the twentieth, though the lines begin to blur as McNickle also moves chronologically into the later twentieth and Silko crosses into the twenty-first century, and both write of earlier periods as well. Alexie helps us to define the late twentieth and the beginnings of the twenty-first century in new directions for Native literatures. All five writers concern themselves with persistent issues of land dispossession and cultural repression. Each is deeply in conversation with the experiences of Indians across America in their own and previous periods, sometimes addressing the future as well. Each tackles intimate questions of identity, community, authenticity, and sovereignty in critically ironic, sometimes humorous ways that additionally bear on America's own emerging self-definitions.

For the sake of length, each thematic chapter focuses more on one of these writers, with generally shorter treatment of the others. Since the focus of this study is thematic analysis rather than critical biography, the chapters allow for varied emphasis from each author's examples. Of course, different aspects of each author organically lend themselves to explicating different aspects of the five themes. While they all address each of the themes, one author's work may lend itself more to a discussion of identity or community, for example, than another. (For salient details about each writer, see the biographical appendix.)

All five of these writers, like the Fool Soldiers, are somewhat liminal figures in their own Indian communities, a pattern true of many writers, Native and otherwise. For example, Louis Owens, a Choctaw, Cherokee, Scots Irish scholar and novelist places his own work, “like that of many other writers identified as Native American,” as an outside-inside observer to Native communities: “I do not write from the heart of a reservation site or community and was not raised within a traditional culture. It would not be incorrect to say, in fact, that today in the U.S., urban centers and academic institutions have come to constitute a kind of diaspora for Native Americans who through many generations of displacement and orchestrated ethnocide are often far from their traditional homelands and cultural communities” (“As If” 171). It may be safe to say that all but Winnemucca, among the writers in this study, would fit Owens’s description of displacement in their various ways.

Rewriting Nationhood, Rewriting Sovereignty

By listening to how they address American audiences, this becomes a study of how these five Indian writers, among many others, have rewritten American national identity in ways that don’t exclude Indians. The set of five concepts derived from Indigenous expression combines aspects of nationalism as a sense of internal solidarity, distinct from an external history of imperial nation-building. We shall see how the dialectic of domestic and imperial nationalism comes into play, however, especially as Native writers from the beginning have questioned the Euro-American ideology of manifest destiny.¹⁹ At the experiential level, authenticity, identity, community, and sovereignty interlace as a set of ideas that shape the image, often turned ironically, that a people or a nation has of itself. Here it is that writers from Indigenous nations find both self-irony and plenty to ridicule in these aspects of America’s self-image.

The idea of a nation may take the sociohistorical form of an ideology, an “imagined community” or “a deep horizontal comradeship,” as Benedict Anderson suggests in his classic study, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Or it may take an even more subconscious form, also grounded in material circumstances, of a “national fantasy,” as Lauren Berlant suggests in her literary study, *Anatomy of National Fantasy: Hawthorne, Utopia, and Everyday Life*. In either formulation, nation-

alism functions as just that, an idea, an *imagined* reality or a projected *fantasy* of community defined in the modern era by increasingly arbitrary borders (such as the 49th parallel). As Daniel Heath Justice writes, “Nationhood is woven in large part from the lives, dreams, and challenges of the people who compose the body politic” (*Our Fire Survives the Storm* 7). The American dream is just that.

Often eclipsing common qualities and quotidian activities shared across the globe, or eclipsing watersheds, mountain ranges, rivers, or other “natural” borders in favor of cultural and political ones, nationalism begins and ends as an abstraction. At times the ideology of nationhood rises up from the grassroots. At other times the “nation” is an ideological imposition constructed from above by the state to maintain the most efficient rule by oligarchs. The state remains a legal entity, while the nation, yet more abstract, remains a political and cultural one.²⁰ This distinction clarifies the peculiar modern dynamic of a single state dominating multiple nationalities within its borders, often simply a legalization of economic empire in other terms.

Yet for all its erasures, a “nation” itself rarely remains distinct from a particular, bordered geography, a beloved homeland. Whatever economic, cultural, and other social forces meld into nationhood, and whatever precedence Marxist analysis might give to economic over ideological forces—whether we set Hegel or Marx on his head—we still often think of a nation as a natural rather than a cultural force. Manifest destiny as a nationalistic rationale—naturalizing cultural definitions of *destiny* as “manifest” on a particular geography—would be the quintessential case in point.

In this discussion of Native perspectives, we can get at different ideas of nationalism—colonial ideas and pluralistic ones—as contending forces through competing histories of this nation. Unilateral versus multilateral definitions of America continue to play out in literature and legislation, precisely in terms of American versus Native American definitions of sovereignty, community, identity, and authenticity. Thus in a fundamental irony, these Native authors are able to reenvision America by their Indigenous perspectives on the five dynamics. The logic here is that even given unequal power relations, a Native “opposite” of Euro-American conquest and genocide is not Indian domination of whites. Justice proposes an ethical pendulum swing in his own tribal perspective on revising history: “It’s an open assertion of the liberating potential of our Indigenous histories and experi-

ences, not a blanket rejection of Eurowestern ideas and traditions” (*Our Fire Survives the Storm* 8). Amid the countless battles and miscommunications, a pattern of pluralism can be seen historically from Apess’s 1830s characterization of the Wampanoag king Philip’s seventeenth-century negotiations with the Puritans to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribal council’s twenty-first-century negotiations with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for tribal management of the National Bison Range. Today, amid some reactionary non-Indian rhetoric opposed to mutual management, the Flathead tribes affirm neighborly relations with the white majority on the rez. “We have worked together on many projects with both the Bison Range staff and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service,” said Fred Matt, recent chairman of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Council. “We believe this new partnership will help us all as stewards of the land.”²¹

Following the logic of these voices, I try to trace a literary trail of tribal sovereignty politics as they are eclipsed and illuminated by American identity issues. That politics, like the land itself and its original peoples, continues to push on America’s sense of itself as a nation opposed to Indian presence. The study thus starts from the perspective that American literature cannot be mapped without tracing the spaces, both geographic and ideological, of tribal sovereignty in its midst. The point here is not to absorb Native into American literature but to read how a complex insistence on difference in Native literature maintains and sustains both Indigenous dynamics and potential American pluralism as its original principle.

To round out this preliminary introduction to the ways Native writers are rewriting the nation, we have to more fully acknowledge the obstacles to reading Native self-representation, which range across dominant culture from the mining industry to the film industry and the academy. Academic culture also varies in its ways of reading Indigenous voices. Popular American notions still expect to absorb otherness, to erase difference. “The white people would shake their heads, more proud than sad that it took a white man to survive in their world and that these Indians couldn’t seem to make it,” Silko writes (*Ceremony* 265–66). Even in the twenty-first century, the land must be cleared. When Indian nations proclaim their tribal sovereignty, and then express it, for instance, in economic development through gaming revenues, their de facto reversals of manifest destiny fly in the face of

American legal, cultural, and psychological understandings. When Native writers publish, they pose the fundamental question of what would change if America were to accept the fact that Indians never vanished and never will. Equally, what would happen if American audiences listened to Native writers? As the Dakota scholar Vine Deloria Jr. wrote in his best-seller, *Custer Died for Your Sins* (1969), “Indian people today have a chance to re-create a type of society for themselves that can defy, mystify, and educate the rest of American society” (262). Deloria made that challenge in the same year that the Kiowa writer N. Scott Momaday won the Pulitzer Prize for his novel *House Made of Dawn*. Especially since 1969, a flood of Indian voices has been writing “to re-create” that “type of society.”

Indeed against ideological and material obstacles, a thread of utopianism or, perhaps more simply, faith weaves through these narratives. As James A. Banks writes, “The margins of U.S. Society, to which people of color have often been confined, have usually been the sites for preserving and defending the freedoms and rights stated in the founding documents of the United States when they were most severely challenged” (*Multicultural Education* vii). This long history has seen many developments of Indian and other intellectuals’ takes on community in America, and the writers that are the focus of this study are in deep dialogue with many other voices, Native and non-Native, as they try to set America on a course of justice.

A previous generation of twentieth-century scholars has made some progress in the slow and fitful unraveling of colonial and patriarchal power dynamics that have defined America. However, studies by non-Natives of Native American literature have often become self-reflexive studies of Euro-Americans and of how they gaze at Native American expression and experience. That work needed to be done, but it was not actually listening to Native American authors. Across the second half of the twentieth century, some valuable cultural and historical analyses in this long process of peeling back have yielded such classic works as Roy Harvey Pearce’s *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind* (1953/1988), Leslie Fiedler’s *Return of the Vanishing American* (1968), Robert Berkhofer’s *The White Man’s Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (1978), and Richard Drinnon’s *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire-Building* (1980/1997). Each of these studies reverts to a focus on the male Euro-American psyche and ideology as it both projects

and eclipses American Indians, who unfortunately continue to vanish beneath these meditations on *the white man's* Indian.

In fact the Pearce-Fiedler-Berkhofer-Drinnon tradition of studies of Euro-American projections onto the Indian unintentionally perpetuates a certain myopia of colonial ideologies. Even in doing the necessary work of uncovering the racist project of American expansion, they had yet to look at Native American experience eclipsed by racial ideologies. It remained for the “other side of the frontier” to speak. America’s colonial mind has remained blind not only to the rich complexity but also to the potential of reciprocity and exchange with Native cultures. Thus, because of a prerequisite focus on colonial domination, a remarkable if inadvertent feature of this broad critique of American ideology is that these scholars managed to map white projections with minimum reference to Indian views. Their necessary exposure of Euro-American images of “the Indian”—and hence of American self-definitions—laid the groundwork for revision, but Indians’ voices remained unheard. Indeed as in many of the latest Hollywood projections, from *Dances with Wolves* to *Pocahontas* and *Apocalypto*, Indian lives and rights continue to disappear behind that screen.

Maureen Konkle offers important perspective on the gaps in scholarly criticism of Native nationalism in her careful discourse analysis, *Writing Indian Nations: Native Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography, 1827–1863*. She identifies problems with a “culturalist criticism” that not only misses the foundational political and legal aspects of antebellum Indigenous publications but that even complicitly “downplays violence and conflict” (32). Like problems with “traditional” versus “individual” categories, Konkle shows how readers’ preoccupation with issues of cultural authenticity (traditional focus) and ensuing psychological identity (individual focus) crises tend unfortunately to reinforce “the theory of Indian difference.” She explains America’s theory, “that Native peoples would disappear—but they did not,” in the face of U.S. government jurisdiction and the ideology of manifest destiny. The racist extension of that theory of racial difference, once confronted by the fact of Native survivance, was the assimilation policy to “kill the Indian and save the man.” Konkle’s nuanced analysis shows how “both the hypothetical civilization of Indians and the hypothetical extinction of Indians are part of the same discursive field. They both ultimately lead to the same thing: the denial of Native political autonomy, the

naturalizing of the incorporation of Native land under U.S. jurisdiction, and the reinforcement of white superiority and Native subordination” (34). Assumptions of white supremacy and of the “noble but doomed” Indian remain deeply ingrained.

While she does not attribute such racist repercussions to “culturalist” critics, Konkle’s map is compelling. A cultural criticism tends toward the erasures of a new, co-optive multiculturalism that replays the “same discursive field” of assimilation and extinction of Indians. She suggests that the tendency of some non-Native scholars to focus nostalgically on cultural change can eclipse the more enduring legal, political, and economic realities of tribal survivance and tribal sovereignty. By stirring Native writing into the melting pot, such critics dilute the potency of Indigenous political critique that would rewrite the nation.

Among these efforts to sharpen the critique of Native literary nationalism, I observe a tendency of many critics who fail to question the dependent aspect of America’s founding federal Indian policy: “domestic dependent nations.” Konkle’s preferred focus instead is on the discourse of *independence* in Native writers of the formative decades of the United States. She notes the reification of limits on Indigenous nationhood: “It is sometimes objected that an ‘Indian nation’—a phrase that became common in Anglo-American legal discourse by the mid-eighteenth century—is not really ‘Indian’ because it is a product of colonization and settlement, an argument that reifies culture as the only real freedom for Native peoples” (*Writing Indian Nations* 6). Certainly freedom is the underlying issue, and Native writers have been calling for political as well as cultural freedom, where both fall under the discourse of sovereignty. Konkle’s work thus helps me to focus on that larger set of terms that constitute Native nationhood and on how that Indigenous design might affect U.S. national evolution.

Konkle and other critics, both Native and non-Native, would emphasize the political and legal dimensions. Many others would emphasize cultural aspects of Indigenous narratives. Of course, both are necessary and relevant, and both speak to each other. Without dialogue among those parts, the network that is Native discourse remains not only incomplete and erasable but ineffective and dismissible. As this study looks at conversation among the larger set of five dynamics, sovereignty especially, but the other key terms as well, resonate politically, spiritually, and culturally.

After the work of Fiedler, Pearce, Berkhofer, and Drinnon, scholars like Konkle have begun the task of critiquing Native voices on their own terms, cultural and political, and in their own community contexts, not primarily as subjects of the United States but as citizens of their own Indigenous nations. Addressing those quite different dynamics is the heart of an ethics of a new criticism and a new pedagogy by a growing presence of writers and scholars, Native and non-Native.²² They are steering critics and student readers away from recycling the colonial gaze. At this critical stage, scholars do well simply to foreground Native voices, to put often humorous but always serious affirmations of sovereignty, community, identity, and changing authenticity—as well as Native “wrongs and claims”—before a wider readership in ways that speak to rising Indian generations. Robert Dale Parker’s phrasing is concise on this point: “Some critics persist in misreading the project of writing about a people or its literature as writing for that people, in effect as speaking for them. Speaking for Indians is the furthest thing from my mind” (*The Invention of Native American Literature* 16). By entering the conversation about both autonomy and inclusion, this study offers an exchange across and around the exclusive cultural frontier that Fiedler et al. have shown is a colonial construct at the heart of American consciousness.

Thus we rediscover the emerging but ancient notion that underneath the many narratives of identity politics in Native American literatures, a driving energy that animates those stories and poems, either by its presence or its absence, is tribal sovereignty. Contemporary criticism and pedagogy around Native literatures have reached a saturation point in focusing so much on secondary identity issues that finally the prior sovereignty issues that have shaped Indigenous identity are crystallizing out of the mix. Reasons why colonial issues in the literature are secondary and Indigenous sovereignty issues are primary emerge when Native stories suggest narrative dynamics of plot, character, and symbol that do not merely reflect or deflect colonial power.

The trick, as always, is power, not to privilege colonial perspectives in the telling of America’s story, thus not to misread Indigenous perspectives as somehow nostalgic nor as powerlessness grasping for lost power. A driving dynamic in this rereading of Native rewriting is then how the “question” of Native identity, key to so much of contemporary Native literature,

leads to sovereignty or community. We shall find sovereignty not as an answer in the literature but as a process. The five terms of nationhood map different modes of reading Native texts, each looking for and recognizing a different narrative and each with its own political resonances. Most critics emphasize one or two among these terms, and most leave out humor altogether.

E pluribus unum

After looking at the obstacles, let's focus briefly on the goals of a redefined *e pluribus unum* to further clarify the introductory context. In his retrospective preface to a 2000 edition of *from Sand Creek*, Simon Ortiz writes, "Even though most times we were not acknowledged to be a part of history, we knew innately that we were a part of the times and circumstances that human societies and cultures were experiencing" (6). Indian communities have identified in many ways with "America." Among many reasons for this sense of linkage are these three: a common sense of humanity, shared territoriality, and a warrior ethic that translates to patriotism. Following the logic of such values, Indian writers have portrayed Indian nations as potentially viable within or beside the American nation.

Such a vision of the American nation affirms the *pluribus* in the nation's motto, against dominant, conformist modes of the *unum*. James A. Banks reflects a twenty-first-century perspective on this question: "The changing ethnic texture of the United States intensifies the challenge of educating citizens and creating an authentic *unum* that has moral authority. An *authentic unum* reflects the experiences, hopes, and dreams of all the nation's citizens" (*Educating Citizens* xii). Banks contrasts such an authentic *unum* with the "imposed *unum*" reflecting "one dominant cultural group" "throughout most of the nation's history."

Many artists of marginalized groups continue to try to imagine what such an "authentic *unum*" means. Native communities working to affirm sovereignty are not focused as much on inclusion as they are on equity. Quite directly Native writers have often pursued an educational agenda with their American readership, inculcating equity. That agenda certainly focuses further on a political curriculum, addressing Banks's "challenge of educating citizens and creating an authentic *unum* that has moral authority." By humanizing Native experiences and perspectives on history, writers of Indian

literature attempt to generate the moral authority of an authentic *pluribus* within American society.

Against the imperial projection of bloodthirsty savages, a Native vision of plurality, if not mutuality, has been lost on America's phobias and philias. Indians upholding the founding American principle of equality have quietly confounded the prevailing American aberration of manifest destiny. By not vanishing, by denying America's erasure of themselves, Native voices have called America to its own principles of inclusion, even as they earned its founding exclusions. Their centuries-long claims to natural justice have reminded America of both its wrongs and its ideals. As Banks explains, "A major ethical inconsistency exists in U.S. society" (*Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives* 10). Each of the writers we will look at in this study strategizes by speaking to Native readers of hope in such ideals and to non-Native readers of the gap between those ideals and American social practices.

The revisionary historian's and critic's job, including that of many Native writers, has been precisely to show how actual relations and possibilities on the ground were made invisible by the narrative expectations of that split ideology of colonialism and its frontier legacies. Over generations it is conceivable that northern California farmers and Klamath Indians, or Montana settlers and Crows, Cheyennes, Salish, Kootenais, or others might have imagined ways to balance their needs if their respective narratives had not been imagined and institutionalized as completely polarized. The work of self-defense leaves little energy for compromise. The pragmatic facts of an inextricable mutuality can trigger either celebration or mourning, but they remain after erasure of otherness fails.²³ Justice points out that the mode of "accommodation and cooperation," what his Cherokee tradition calls the "Beloved Path," "requires a greater conceptual leap" than the warlike "Chickamauga consciousness," "for the actively peaceful resistance of this perspective is accorded a much lower status in U.S. contexts" (*Our Fire Survives the Storm* 16). According to Justice, "a Eurowestern fascination with an assumed oppositional dualism" between traditional white/peace and red/war misreads both Cherokee culture and Indian-white relations. Such cross-cultural misinterpretation persists because "warriors who advocate the shedding of blood have far more cultural capital in the United states" (156). It seems easier just to erase the Indian.

The Native literary storyteller's job has been to undo that erasure in the dominant narrative. Instead of a center erasing the margins, stories by American Indian authors show an undercurrent of ongoing life, the broader cultures of the land on which frontiers have been imagined and overlaid, so often with tragic consequences. Moreover these so-called marginal stories accumulate to redefine the so-called center, that is, to decenter the national narrative, if not the national centers of power. As they show the material relations of colonial history wherein Native individuals can see their way to act for their people, they also show where non-Natives can build toward America's potential democratic society, America's own dream, "wealthy with . . . compassion and knowledge," in the words of Simon Ortiz. A collective humanity and agency in Native stories complicates the neat oppositional lines in Hollywood and in American history textbooks.

The static or dynamic qualities of culture and the permeability of cultural boundaries emerge as larger questions that govern authenticity, identity, and community. Can cultures and individuals change and yet remain themselves? The Fool Soldiers negotiated precisely this ground. They pre-saged Simon Ortiz's generous lines around such historic events as the Sand Creek massacre of 1864. Ortiz represents that Colorado tragedy, of the same decade as the Fool Soldiers affair, as survivable within this cyclic process:

That dream
shall have a name
after all,
and it will not be vengeful
but wealthy with love
and compassion
and knowledge.
And it will rise
in this heart
which is our America. (*from Sand Creek* 95)

With such a vision, Ortiz and other Native writers are clear about America: at the heart of that dream is tribal sovereignty, an extreme test of the plural in America's goal of *e pluribus unum*.

Ground Theory

If the American ethic is a redefined *e pluribus unum*, ground theory maps those redefinitions in texts. It applies aesthetics to that ethic by reading Indigenous values of expression and representation. It is that five-faceted lens. It helps make visible how any or all of the five principles might change or evolve in a text as it tells stories of ethical relations with the living ground. Thus it is a theory of both analysis and advocacy. The ground is always already spherical and in motion, three- and four-dimensional, a solid and a fluid, breathing space linked in time with the sky through rain, rivers, sun, roots, leaves, lightning, clouds, as water, atomic energy, and other life forces circulating through the system that is the earth. Each of the five principles circulates by those natural laws.²⁴

Beneath the tragedies of oppositional dualism, beneath the “frontier thinking” that so misreads the Fool Soldiers, the ground of these five discursive fields in both oral and written Native traditions remains a way of knowing and a way of analyzing texts that recognizes survivance beyond tragedy. The more comic mode of that narrative ground encourages qualities of systems thinking, field orientation, dialogics. The very openness of such thinking calls not for a lack of rigor but for an honest, we might say good-humored or at least ironic refusal to pretend final definitions. A ground theory looks at narrative structures of lives linked to stories of the soil, where ideas of nationhood play out, often in monologic, tragic terms.

Contemporary Indigenous intellectuals remain alert to the material repressions of frontier thinking as ideological oversimplification. For example, Daniel Heath Justice identifies the repercussions of “an oppositional dualism based on old ideas of ‘savagism vs. civilization’”: “Simplification is just another word for genocide, and that philosophy is fundamentally antithetical to relational principles of kinship, respect, and mutual accountability” (*Our Fire Survives the Storm* 157). Efforts to structure an alternative American history have always required rethinking the frontier precisely because the frontier operates by a reductive binary formulation. By focusing on “relational principles” of survivance and exchange, of “mutual accountability” rather than fantasies of erasure and domination, Native storytellers and a theory built on their dynamics make visible the often dialogic realities working on that ground. Those dynamic processes factor into our five themes.²⁵

In “Decolonializing Criticism” (1994), I analyzed a politics of epistemology wherein Indigenous dialogics contrast with an invasive dialectics of the frontier. Dialogic ways of looking at the world lead to narrative perspectives and choices more agile and able to circumvent or subvert violent dialectics of colonial mentalities.²⁶ Allowing for historical exceptions, here is that politics of epistemology in a nutshell. Interconnectedness activates more channels for agency around and through reductive binaries. Stories and identities build differently on those different mental structures.²⁷ When one’s way of knowing is structured by the reciprocal economy of the world as natural, spiritual, and social, by the comic complexity of Indigenous reality, then one’s political choices and judgments expand into those interconnected relations toward a more democratic pluralism. Alternatively, when one’s way of knowing is structured by the extractive economy of the industrial, financial, colonial world, by the perceived simplicity of imperial fantasy, then one’s political choices and judgments follow those relations of dominance toward a more hierarchical politics. The former, a dialogical model, conceives a culture of mutuality and integration of difference. The latter, described well as “dialectical materialism,” exploits race, class, gender, and other pluralities, including the diversity of earth’s resources, to maintain its hierarchical nightmares.

While the hierarchical model writes history, this distinction between a dream of dominance and the reality of pluralism is one of Native America’s clearest literary gifts to America. Of course, in a winner-take-all society, political pluralism is also a dream, however actual the plural realities of the body politic may remain. Tim Schouls explores possibilities for aboriginal pluralism as “a public arrangement in which distinct groups live side by side in conditions of mutual recognition and affirmation” (*Shifting Boundaries* x).²⁸ The dream stays alive because the reality is plural. Such writing moves at the heart of the American experiment, and because it is yet to be realized, Native writers, in their unique ways, have been working among others across the centuries to make it real. A ground theory reflects those ways of knowing in order to make those narrative structures more visible to readers schooled in binary thinking.

Robin DeRosa describes theoretical steps that move in this less binary direction, in her introduction to *Assimilation and Subversion in Earlier American Literature*. DeRosa refers to controversies among “students, profes-

sors, and literary critics alike” about the enslaved Phyllis Wheatley, one of the first African American poets, and whether she was “fully assimilated into her new American culture” or her poetry expressed “a veiled but tangible statement against her own oppression” (1). DeRosa offers “a different paradigm” for analyzing Wheatley, instead of the reductive dialectic that would “polarize ‘assimilation’ and ‘subversion.’” Instead the critics in her collection “give readers useful models for approaching texts by nondominant subjects, models that consider the polyphonic flow of power and the possibility of simultaneous multiple, conflicting, and even oppositional effects of oppression” (1). Applying a more nuanced, perhaps deconstructive approach, the essays in her collection “offer new ways to think about dialectic itself” (1), as these illuminate works by marginalized writers such as Wheatley and Native American Christians such as Samson Occom and William Apess.

On Native ground, I find indeed a system of thinking that moves beyond dialectic readings and realities. Thus I read in many Native texts a fundamental pattern—with exceptions—of dialogic approaches to modern dialectics. The dialogics of Indigenous narrative structures tend to deconstruct and sometimes even transcend historical binaries. Their deconstructive strategy reveals how opposites, such as white and Indian, civilization and wilderness, actually share qualities across the apparent divide. Their transcendent strategy resists domination by representing Indigenous lands and lifeways as central to a wider narrative, in contrast to Euro-Americans as culturally impoverished and therefore less connected to the strength of the land.²⁹ We can see these dynamics specifically in those five key questions of modern national self-definition. As the Choctaw poet Joy Harjo puts it, “We exist together in a sacred field of meaning” (Harjo, *This I Believe*). And as the Cherokee scholar Jace Weaver puts it, “Unlike any other racial or ethnic minority, Native American tribes are separate sovereign nations. As flawed as it was, the treaty process confirmed this status” (Weaver et al., *American Indian Literary Nationalism* 46). That flawed sovereign status on “a sacred field of meaning” invites a ground theory to map its dynamics.

Susan Berry Brill de Ramírez offers a valuable “conversive” critique of dialogics that helps to refine this ground theory. She prefers the “co-” of what

she calls a converse model of literary scholarship to the remnants of duality inherent in the “di-” of dialogics. The positive direction of her rationale is clarifying: “Here relationality is intersubjective and takes the form of a circular conversivity (as distinct from the linear oppositionality of dialectic, discursive, and dialogic models). Such a model provides a strategy in which peoples, cultures, persons, and texts interrelationally inform and reform literary scholarship, thereby leading to new readings and insights otherwise not possible” (*Contemporary American Indian Literatures* 37). Brill de Ramírez envisions a democratic, nonhierarchical theory of reading “interrelationally” that derives from a larger set balancing unity and diversity: “Difference is not, thereby, lost; on the contrary, difference is affirmed through the intersubjectivity of converse relations that recognizes the subjective status of oneself *and* of others” (110). Her analysis is explicitly, and etymologically, true to the conceptual linkages and differences, that is, binaries versus commonalities, in these theoretical terms. Where her converse communications might “co-create and transform their own stories and each other” (73) we might envision Native writers and both Native and non-Native readers rewriting the story of America.³⁰

An adequate term for this theory of reading, or this way of knowing, will then have to be *ground*, where all the voices standing on and under and over that ground may speak and be heard. Ground theory invokes the comic ecology of reciprocal interrelations between subject and object, self and other, human and nature, and, in ongoing colonial history, of interconnections between Indian and white. The social and psychological dynamics are planted in a larger ground of culture and nature, where humanity and environment, nature and culture are inextricable.

Ground theory, then, reaffirms the primary challenge in Indian-white relations: the land, its creatures and its people interrelated and always seeking balance. To protect creatures of that land, such as the salmon, a Klamath tribal member invokes such social and psychological ground—as a defense against the frontier mentality—when he claims to understand the farmer irrigators’ plight: “This is simply a battle over limited resources. We live on those fish. We understand what those farmers are going through. They’ve been strangling our water for generations.”³¹ Similarly when a Crow tribal chairman pronounces the obvious, “People in Montana need to know that Indian tribes are part of Montana,”³² he is returning the dis-

cussion to fundamental human ground that has been overlooked even while expropriated.

Invitations to dialogue frequently are dismissed as naïve. To apply ground theory, to focus on a matrix of narrative factors, is not to deny the powerful oppositional stance that many Native nations and tribal individuals have adopted against the cultural, economic, and military forces of a sustained colonial project. The warrior mode, the arrow, the coup stick, the trigger, the war club, the critical or satirical pen, certainly invoke nuanced values of opposition, even to the ultimately lethal violence of the dialectic.

That force of direct Native resistance to colonialism is the stuff of American history. Powhatan and his Confederacy in the late 1500s; King Philip and Po'Pay in the 1600s; Brant and the Iroquois Confederacy and Tecumseh in the 1700s and early 1800s; Blackhawk again in the early 1800s; Crazy Horse, Red Cloud, Sitting Bull, and Geronimo in the late 1800s—these are only a few leaders among thousands, who are in turn only the vanguard of hundreds of thousands, indeed millions of Native warriors who defended their homelands. Yet it is not only because that history is written mostly by the victors that an alternative history needs to be unearthed. As scholars of the “white man’s Indian” have pointed out, America needed a noble savage, a worthy but dispensable enemy, to ennoble their own ignoble and illegal conquest of a continent.³³ An alternative history grows out of Native storytelling, and it offers America not only a human enemy but a regrounded, humane America.

Invoking sacred ground in their persuasive narratives, Native writers often aim the rhetoric of their texts, their “wordarrows,” to quote the Ojibwa writer Gerald Vizenor, at a non-Native audience. As soon as Native writers set pen to paper or fingertips to keyboard, they recognize the enormous challenges for what I call dialogics to elude, deconstruct, and transcend layers of American investments in dialectical thinking. The very colonial relations that launched Columbus’s mercantilism in the “New World” and that gave Colonel Pattee his mandate to jail the Fool Soldiers on the “frontier” still make it difficult for non-Native readers to see dialogic ground, the pluralist possibilities for American society. Indigenous narratives shore up legal, political, cultural, spiritual, and ecological ground against the linear torrent of mainstream dominance.

If the ground, the homeland functions as a network for the action of these stories, the fact that humans share the earth does not mean that anyone can come along and claim it. Native communities fiercely defend their aboriginal land rights and all the associated rights that come with their sovereignty on that land. A ground theory that recognizes Native voices thus moves beyond multiculturalism to pluralism, not a melting pot but a matrix. As Elizabeth Cook-Lynn warns critics of Native literatures, to read Native voices only for what they can offer to white audiences or to imagine that Native writers merely want entry into the American literary canon is to misread the dynamics of their community-based narratives.³⁴ Sacred ground never was for sale.

Cook-Lynn's vital 1993 publication on "cosmopolitanism and nationalism," "The American Indian Fiction Writer," triggered the literary nationalism of Craig Womack, Jace Weaver, Robert Warrior, Lisa Brooks, and other Native American scholars.³⁵ The pluralism of ground theory grows from her propositions as well. Cook-Lynn outlines the power issues of cultural integration for "the nativist" scholar, her term for those who dedicate themselves to a community-based approach. She raises "the question of whether or not 'opening up the American literary canon' to include Native literary traditions and contemporary works will have much relevance within its own set of unique aims, i.e., the interest in establishing the myths and metaphors of sovereign nationalism which have always fueled the literary canon of tribal peoples, their literary lives" (29–30). Opening the American canon to "others" promises neither freedom from co-optation nor freedom for self-representation. Elucidating narratives of tribal sovereignty, Cook-Lynn suggests, is the responsibility of both writers and critics of Native literatures. Literary sovereignty resists the melting pot.

What emerges here is a fundamental direction in the Native value of tribal sovereignty that underlies many narratives of Indian community and disintegration. That direction remains not only to resist the melting pot but further to remap America toward a genuine culture of diversity, a conceivable matrix of autonomous cultural centers. James Ruppert's analysis of "the mythic mode of identity production" and "the greater self in the communal" (*Mediation* 27–28) in Native literatures of "mediation" goes far toward clarifying dynamics of identity and community in these texts, while here we add both the mythical and political dimensions of sovereignty.

Thus a balanced nationalism of tribal voices can and does confront the dominating, co-optive cosmopolitanism of a globalized readership, especially as non-Indian readers have so often constituted the target audience for Indian writers. Cook-Lynn's renowned criticism is sweeping, worth quoting at length to contextualize and contrast a ground theory:

What may be important to conclude here, then, is that much of what is called Contemporary American Indian Fiction is sustained as such by non-Indian publishers and editors, critics and scholars for Euro-Anglo canonical reasons (some might even suggest imperialistic reasons) rather than for either the continuation of Indigenous literary traditions and development of nationalistic critical apparatuses or for the sake of simple intellectual curiosity. Because of flaws in pedagogy, much modern fiction written in English by American Indians is being utilized to provide the basis for the cynical absorption into the "melting pot," pragmatic inclusion in the canon and involuntary unification of an "American National Literary Voice." Ironically, much criticism as it is being published today contributes to the further domination of first-world nations and individualism all the while failing in its own implied search for Sovereignty and Tribalism. ("The American Indian Fiction Writer" 35)

Cook-Lynn depicts the corporate world of publishing Native literature as it is linked to the corporate academy, marking not only collisions but collusions between cosmopolitanism and capitalism that by definition would co-opt otherwise autonomous cultural centers as new markets in which to expand.³⁶ The massive problem that Cook-Lynn and other scholars are responding to has been the de facto Euro-American co-optation, assimilation, and destruction of so many Native lands and cultures. That absorption and assimilation are part of what Cook-Lynn identifies as cosmopolitanism, an economic engine of aggrandizement that generalizes cultural differences into commodities for its ever-expanding markets. *Cosmopolitanism*, as I understand her use of it, is a twentieth-century term for "manifest destiny" in the academy. Her nationalism is a resistance against that co-optive universalism.

Cook-Lynn also is describing here the antipluralistic dangers in the academy parallel to corporate multiculturalism in business, where ostensible diversity becomes merely another American term for the melting pot. The

established economic powers welcome a “multicultural” version of otherness that would provide more markets for its products without challenging the economic structures, built on colonized land, that bolster their bottom line. An entrenched academy, and its editors often linked to the corporate world of global publishing, welcome multicultural diversity as the ground for academic careers, intellectual curiosity, and sales of classroom texts.

By Cook-Lynn’s account, we may see how American Indian literatures do not ask to be absorbed into American literature like Indigenous corn, squash, beans, tomatoes, and potatoes melting into a pot of America’s literary soup. Instead the inverse has occurred, as we will discuss; Native cultural production evidently has long been acculturating Euro-Americans, even transforming them (and the rest of the world) on fundamental cultural and institutional levels. One grounded example is how applications of Indigenous agronomy now account for two-thirds of the modern world’s food products.³⁷

The land has voices. Assertions of Native American writers become the assertions of the land. Cook-Lynn focuses a grounded critique on a connection between Indigenous literature, the land, and the nation. Implicit in her charge is the suggestion that Euro-American scholars, following the lead of Native scholars, might enter a discussion of how land issues of tribal sovereignty shape the narratives of Native writers and their vision for twenty-first-century relations.³⁸

The point here is to enter a conversation, not to appropriate or represent Indian voices. The ground speaks dialogically, requiring listening, inviting conversation. Instead of a wannabe, co-optive universalism that projects and then helps itself to its own cultural smorgasbord, a ground theory tries to listen to the ways those songs and that drum speak to me and to others, to what literary celebration and grief over Indian lives and cultures have said to both Native America and non-Native America about issues that matter to them, including diversity and community. Justice offers both a measure and a kind of resolution: “Native spiritual and intellectual traditions have a long history of inclusive flexibility. A world that’s imbued with innumerable spirits has room for the different entities and the worldviews of other peoples. This flexibility is marked by an attention to relationships, which require sensitivity and engagement to stay healthy” (*Our Fire Survives the Storm* 49). That “inclusive flexibility” invites conversation.

Over the centuries Native writers have insisted on humanity, dignity, and autonomy, and again tribal sovereignty, as a realignment of America's power relations. Such insistence only reaffirms the *pluribus* in America's own promise. As Cook-Lynn explains, "The idea of decolonization is not new to tribal peoples" ("The American Indian Fiction Writer" 214). Readers and writers of Native American literature thus return to fundamentals, to the ground. Simon Ortiz describes the poignant invitation of that animate American earth, even under contestation:

Like a soul, the land
was open to them, like a child's heart.
There was no paradise,
but it would have gently and willingly
and longingly given them food and air
and substance for every comfort.
If they had only acknowledged
even their smallest conceit. (*from Sand Creek* 79)